

Important Telephone Numbers

Domestic Violence Resources

**Plymouth County
District Attorney's Hotline**
508-583-3306

A New Day
508-588-8255

**South Shore Women's
Resource Center**
508-746-2664

**Family and
Community Resources**
508-583-6498

Police -Emergency
9-1-1

Plymouth County Courts

Brockton District Court
508-587-8000

Hingham District Court
781-749-7000

Plymouth District Court
508-747-8400

Wareham District Court
508-295-8300

Domestic Violence



Office of Plymouth County
District Attorney

Timothy J. Cruz

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Brockton, MA 02301

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www.mass.gov/da/plymouth

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

Timothy J. Cruz
District Attorney
Plymouth County

**32 Belmont Street
Brockton, MA 02301**

508-584-8120

A Message from District Attorney Tim Cruz

As your District Attorney, I am committed to ensuring the safety and protection of every resident of Plymouth County.

When it comes to the issue of violence, we often assume that it comes from the hands of a stranger. Unfortunately, that is not always the case. Domestic Violence occurs in many homes, at the hands of the people we may know or love. A way in which we can keep our families safe, and combat this violence is by educating our communities and creating a greater awareness of Domestic Violence.

The Goal of the Domestic Violence Unit in my office is to assist and educate those who have been emotionally and physically abused through domestic violence.

If you or someone you know is in a relationship that is abusive, I urge you to call for help. Our Domestic Violence Advocates are available to assist you in creating a safety plan to ensure your safety.

There is no excuse for Domestic Violence, we all have the right to live without fear.

Sincerely,

Timothy J. Cruz
District Attorney



What is Domestic Violence?

Domestic violence is a pattern of control used by one person (the abuser) to exert power over another (the victim).

Threats and abuse, i.e.: verbal, emotional, physical, sexual and financial, are all behaviors that are used by the abuser to maintain power and control within a relationship.

Domestic violence is not caused by alcohol or drug abuse, depression, lack of money, lack of a job, mental illness or abuse as a child. However, the abuser often uses these stressors as their reason, or their excuse for their violent behavior.

Domestic violence crosses all social, economic, racial, cultural and religious boundaries. Experience indicates that the incidents of violence and the severity of the violence tends to increase over time.

Battering is a violent act which the abuser chooses to commit. Battering is not caused or provoked by the action or inaction of the victim.

*While the abuser may blame the victim,
abuse is never the victim's fault.*

Under Chapter 209A of Massachusetts General Laws, you may obtain an order of protection from a judge if you are being abused by a family or household member.

What is a 209A Abuse Prevention order?

An Abuse Prevention Order, called a "209A" or a "Restraining Order", is a civil court action that provides immediate protection from abuse. You may obtain an order of protection if you are:

- a spouse or former spouse
- a present or former household member, including roommates and same sex partners
- a relative by blood or marriage
- the parent of your minor child
- a person with whom you have had a substantial dating relationship

What may I request on a 209A order?

On a 209A order, you may request:

- The abuser to refrain from abusing you
- The abuser to refrain from contacting you, or any child/ren in your custody, unless authorized by the Court
- The abuser to leave and remain away from your residence, and your workplace
- That your address be impounded
- The abuser to pay child support, if the abuser has the legal obligation to do so
- Temporary custody of your minor child/ren
- Compensation for losses suffered due to the abuse

Where can I obtain a 209A Order?

You may apply for an order from the District or Probate and Family Court and Superior Court in your towns jurisdiction. You may request an emergency 209A through your local police department after court hours and on weekends.

You do not need an attorney to file a 209A.

A SAFEPLAN advocate from the Massachusetts Office of Victim Assistance (MOVA) will be available to assist in filing the paperwork and answer any questions. The advocate will discuss your options regarding what services are available to you, and can assist you in developing a personalized safety plan. The abuser does not have to have criminal charges for you to obtain a 209A.

**For more information or assistance,
please call the District Attorney's Office
at:
508-584-8120**